



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General**

Inspection of Embassy Asuncion, Paraguay



Embassy Asuncion had moved aggressively to take advantage of Paraguay's increased readiness to act against corruption and transnational criminal organizations by initiating coordinated programs to disrupt criminal activity, narcotics trafficking, and possible financing of terrorist organizations. The country team and the interagency law enforcement/counterterrorism working group were functioning collaboratively to advance these objectives under the leadership of the Ambassador and deputy chief of mission. The Embassy had also supported Paraguay's

transition to more democratic institutions and was establishing constructive relations with the opposition leaders who won the country's fairest election ever.

The Embassy had taken great public diplomacy advantage of Paraguayans' general agreement with U.S. foreign policy toward Paraguay to improve the image of the United States in Paraguay. The Ambassador had been very effective in underlining publicly, often using the Guarani national language, U.S. support for the Paraguayan people, including private sector medical and scholarship contributions.

The Embassy had witnessed an explosive growth in Department of Defense personnel focused principally on training Paraguayan Armed Forces in peacekeeping and support for counterterrorism. Additional growth of U.S. military presence is not desirable at this time, and the embassy will need to continue assuring that U.S. armed forces' presence and activities in country do not overshadow other U.S. programs. The Embassy was tracking closely proposed changes in personnel under Chief of Mission authority and was adhering to National Security Decision Directive-38 procedures. However, DOD personnel under the authority of an area military commander were receiving International Cooperative Administrative Support Services for which they may not have been paying the appropriate amount. The Embassy will need to restrict further personnel growth because of space constraints until the completion of the new embassy compound.